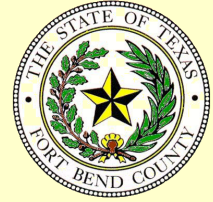




HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES



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VOLUME 8, ISSUE 1

## Public Health Informer

# Zika Virus in Texas

As of February 1, 2016, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared that the Zika virus constitutes a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC).

Zika is primarily spread by a mosquito-borne virus that can cause fever, rash, muscle and joint aches and red eyes/conjunctivitis. Symptoms are usually mild, and most people exposed to Zika virus won't develop any symptoms at all. This primarily mosquito-transmitted disease is of particular concern due to its impact on pregnant women, as it is suspected to cause brain damage in newborn babies.

## Zika Virus in Texas

As of Feb. 3, 2016, Texas has 10 cases of Zika virus disease. Nine are travelers who were infected abroad and diagnosed after they returned home. One case involves a Dallas County resident who had sexual contact with someone who acquired the Zika infection while traveling abroad.

Updated Case Count Information can be found on the Texas Department of State Health Services' Website by visiting the following link:

<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/news/updates.shtm>

## Zika Virus in Fort Bend County

There are currently no confirmed cases of Zika virus in Fort Bend County. Information will be updated every time a new case is confirmed in the future. For updated information visit: [www.fortbendcountyhhs.com](http://www.fortbendcountyhhs.com)

## Zika Virus in other countries

Currently, outbreaks are occurring in many countries. Prior to 2015, Zika virus outbreaks occurred in areas of Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Pacific Islands. Zika virus will continue to spread and it is difficult to determine how the virus will spread over time.

For the latest travel information, visit,

<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/zika-travel-information>

For more information on Zika virus, visit, [www.cdc.gov/zika](http://www.cdc.gov/zika)

# Flu Season is not over: Take 3 actions

## 1 Take time to get a flu vaccine.

- CDC recommends a yearly flu vaccine as the first and most important step in protecting against flu viruses.
- Flu vaccination can reduce flu illnesses, doctors' visits, and missed work and school due to flu, as well as prevent flu-related hospitalizations and deaths.
- Everyone 6 months of age and older should get a flu vaccine as soon as the current season's vaccines are available.
- Vaccination also is important for health care workers, and other people who live with or care for high risk people to keep from spreading flu to high risk people.

## 2 Take everyday preventive actions to stop the spread of germs.

- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you are sick with flu-like illness, stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone and limit contact with others as much as possible to keep from infecting them.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs like the flu.

## 3 Take flu antiviral drugs if your doctor prescribes them.

- If you get the flu, antiviral drugs maybe prescribed by your physician. Antiviral drugs are different from antibiotics. They are prescription medicines (pills, liquid or an inhaled powder) and are not available over-the-counter.
- Antiviral drugs can make illness milder and shorten the time you are sick. They may also prevent serious flu complications.
- Flu-like symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people also may have vomiting and diarrhea.

## ***Fort Bend County Health & Human Services and Fort Bend County Medical Reserve Corps Houston Marathon Mobile Medical Unit***

Fort Bend County Health & Human Services' Public Health Emergency Preparedness Program (PHEP) Staff and Fort Bend County Medical Reserve Corps (FBCMRC) volunteers partnered with Southeast Texas Regional Advisory Council (SETRAC) and the Houston Marathon Committee to deploy the HHS Mobile Medical Unit to serve as an aid station for marathon runners and to be available to assist should a Mass Casualty Incident (MCI) occur. Staff at the Mobile Medical Unit are there primarily to treat minor abrasions, and chaffing, and provide topical relief for cramped muscles. This real event mobilization generated much interest from our MRC volunteers and allowed us to interact with both local and regional partners.



Pictured: Mobile Medical Unit (MMU)



## Public Health News at a Glance

### CDC Launches Improved Online Foodborne Outbreak Search Tool

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released a redesigned online tool making it easier to search data on foodborne disease outbreaks. The updated Foodborne Outbreak Online Database Tool (FOOD Tool) lets users search nearly 20 years of outbreak data by state, food, or organism.

An estimated 1 in 6 Americans get sick from foodborne illnesses every year. Tracking and reporting outbreak information is critical to understanding how foodborne illness affects America's health. During an outbreak, public health investigators can use the database to help point them toward possible contaminated food sources by searching foods, and the organisms, implicated in past outbreaks. Reporters and members of the public can use the database to understand the history of recent or ongoing outbreaks of foodborne illness.

FOOD Tool's data come from CDC's Foodborne Disease Outbreak Surveillance System (FDOSS), which captures information on foodborne outbreaks. CDC analyzes these data to understand the impact of foodborne outbreaks and the causes, foods, settings, and contributing factors (for example, food kept at room temperature for too long) involved in outbreaks.

For more information on the FOOD Tool visit, <http://wwwn.cdc.gov/foodborneoutbreaks/Default.aspx>

### Fort Bend County MRC NEEDS YOU!



**OUR KIT ISN'T COMPLETE WITHOUT YOU.**

[www.homelandpreparedness.org](http://www.homelandpreparedness.org)

Fort Bend County Medical Reserve Corps is recruiting volunteers. There are 3 tiers of membership in the FBCMRC:

Tier 1 - Licensed Medical Professionals

Tier 2 - People not currently licensed but have medical experience (retired nurses, doctors)

Tier 3 - People without medical experience but can assist in handing out forms, directing patient flow, providing information, work in a phone bank, etc.

The FBCMRC supplements the existing emergency response systems in place. If you are interested in taking part in the Medical Reserve Corps as a volunteer, please contact: Cornelia Jammer, [Info@homelandpreparedness.org](mailto:Info@homelandpreparedness.org), 832-425-8524.



## Conferences & Trainings

### **2016 NACCHO Preparedness Summit**

Save Date: April 19-22, 2016  
Location: Dallas, Texas  
Registration: Registration now open!  
Cost: Varies by Affiliation  
Hotel: Hilton Anatole  
Contact: [www.preparednesssummit.org](http://www.preparednesssummit.org)

### **2016 Texas Public Health Association (TPHA) Conference- SAVE THE DATE!**

Save Date: April 11-13, 2016  
Location: Galveston, TX  
Contact: Texas Public Health Association  
PO Box 201540  
Austin, Texas 78720-1540  
Phone (512)336-2520; FAX (512)336-0533; visit: [www.texasapha.org](http://www.texasapha.org)

### **Fort Bend County Health & Human Services' Public Preparedness Trainings**

The Public Health Emergency Preparedness Program offers online training for disaster preparedness within the county. The trainings are a community resource and can be accessed by registering on the training website at: <http://ftbend.togtraining.com/>

Topics include:

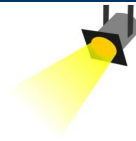
- Epidemiology 101
- Crisis Communications
- Bioterrorism Agents
- Family Preparedness





## Epi Corner

### *Disease Spotlight:* Zika



Zika is a disease caused by the Zika virus that is spread to people primarily through the bite of an infected *Aedes* species mosquito. The most common symptoms of Zika are fever, rash, joint pain, and conjunctivitis (red eyes). The illness is usually mild with symptoms lasting for several days to a week. People usually don't get sick enough to go to the hospital, and they very rarely die of Zika.

About 1 in 5 people infected with Zika will get sick. For people who get sick, the illness is usually mild. For this reason, many people might not realize they have been infected. Symptoms typically begin 2 to 7 days after being bitten by an infected mosquito.

Zika is primarily transmitted through the bite of infected *Aedes* mosquitoes, the same mosquitoes that spread Chikungunya and dengue. These mosquitoes are aggressive daytime biters and they can also bite at night. Mosquitoes become infected when they bite a person already infected with the virus. Infected mosquitoes can then spread the virus to other people through bites. It can also be transmitted from a pregnant mother to her baby during pregnancy or around the time of birth. The CDC is studying how some mothers can pass the virus to their babies.

Anyone who lives in or travels to an area where Zika virus is found and has not already been infected with Zika virus can get it from mosquito bites.

There is no vaccine to prevent Zika. The best way to prevent diseases spread by mosquitoes is to protect yourself and your family from mosquito bites. Here's how:

- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
- Drain standing water as mosquitoes lay their eggs in standing water
- Use Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered insect repellents. All EPA-registered insect repellents are evaluated for safety and effectiveness.





*Fort Bend Secure: A Bio-Defense Network*, is a proactive initiative to establish  
**CLOSED Dispensing Sites** with businesses throughout the county.

CLOSED Dispensing Sites:

- Are locations that are operated by private businesses, that will provide medications at no cost for their specific population (i.e., employees and their families)
- Minimize the impact of the emergency on businesses by maintaining continuity of operations, and on the community by saving lives
- Are not open to the public
- Distribute medications at no cost to recipients

If your organization chooses to become a CLOSED Dispensing Site, you will have a tremendous opportunity to combat the impact of a public health threat or emergency. Together with your local public health agency, you will be able to address an assortment of public health issues in a ground-breaking way.

By becoming a CLOSED Dispensing Site, your business will be better protected in the event of a public health emergency. You'll receive and dispense medications and medical supplies directly to your employees and their families. By providing the materials and support they need, your business will help to ensure the general health and well being of not just your employees, but all of those affected by the public health emergency. With your cooperation, you will also be helping your community and your Health Department concentrate their efforts on dispensing medications to the general public.

To learn more about this program and how to become a Closed Dispensing Site partner please contact:

**Fort Bend County Health & Human Services**

Strategic National Stockpile Coordinator

Fort Bend County Health & Human Services

Office: 281-238-3514

[php@fortbendcountytexas.gov](mailto:php@fortbendcountytexas.gov)

Although hurricane season is months away, it's not too early to get prepared! One way to prepare is by registering with Enable Fort Bend. Enable Fort Bend is a system that allows emergency management personnel to be aware of those with **medical and functional needs** in Fort Bend County.

### Who should register ?

Anyone living at home who needs medical assistance including:

- Persons with a disability
- Persons with hearing and vision impairment
- Persons requiring medical equipment
- Persons who anticipate needing assistance in an emergency

### Why should I register?

During a disaster or an emergency, people with functional and medical needs may require assistance if they experience power outages, need medications or need medical support.

This survey will help identify people who may need assistance during an emergency and assist in planning for such an event.

### How do I register?

Go to

**[www.enablefortbend.com](http://www.enablefortbend.com)**

**OR**

Call **281-238-3514** to have a survey sent to you.

**Don't forget to be prepared! Make a Kit, Have a Plan, Stay Informed!**



#### **Public Health**

Prevent. Promote. Protect.

**Fort Bend County**

**Health & Human Services**

**4520 Reading Road**

**Suite A-100**

**Rosenberg, Texas 77471**

**Phone: 281-238-3233**

**Email: [hhs@co.fort-bend.tx.us](mailto:hhs@co.fort-bend.tx.us)**

**Website: [www.fortbendcountyhhs.com](http://www.fortbendcountyhhs.com)**

**Health & Human Services is Fort Bend County's principal agency responsible for protecting the health of county residents and providing essential human services, especially for those least able to help themselves.**

**The Public Health team works to protect the health and welfare of the citizens of Fort Bend County through disease prevention and intervention, and through the promotion of a healthy community environment.**



